

REMARKS

Entry of the foregoing and reconsideration of the application identified in caption, as amended, pursuant to and consistent with 37 C.F.R. §1.111 and in light of the remarks which follow, are respectfully requested.

By the above amendments, withdrawn claims 15-48 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 1 and 9 have been amended for clarification purposes by replacing the phrase "formed on" with "in contact with" prior to the phrase "said at least one thermal diffusion layer." Support for such amendments can be found in the instant specification at least at page 13, lines 3-6.

In the Official Action, claims 1-3, 6-9 and 12-14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over Japanese Patent Document No. 03-162705 (*Koshikawa*) in view of Japanese Patent Document No. 2000-057534 (*Iizuka*). Withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested for at least the following reasons.

Independent claim 1 is directed to a thin-film magnetic head comprising: an inductive write head element including an upper core layer with a front end section magnetically coupling with an upper magnetic pole, a lower core layer with a front end section magnetically coupling with a lower magnetic pole, a coil conductor formed to pass between said upper core layer and said lower core layer, and a coil insulation layer for sandwiching said coil conductor; at least one thermal diffusion layer with a good thermal conductivity in contact with said coil insulation layer at an outside region of said upper core layer, wherein no protection layer is present on the thermal diffusion layer; and a thin coating film in contact with said at least one thermal diffusion layer, only said thin coating film being formed on said at least one thermal diffusion layer, said thin coating film being made of a material selected

from Ti, Cr, Ta, Ni, Fe, Co, Au, Pt, Rh and Ru, or an alloy containing at least Ti, Cr, Ta, Ni, Fe or Co.

According to another aspect, independent claim 9 is directed to a thin-film magnetic head.

Koshikawa fails to disclose or suggest each feature recited in independent claims 1 and 9. For example, *Koshikawa* fails to disclose or suggest a thin coating film in contact with at least one thermal diffusion layer, said thin coating film being made of a material selected from Ti, Cr, Ta, Ni, Fe, Co, Au, Pt, Rh and Ru, or an alloy containing at least Ti, Cr, Ta, Ni, Fe or Co, as recited in each of claims 1 and 9. Such deficiencies have been acknowledged by the Patent Office at page 3 of the Official Action.

Iizuka fails to cure the above-described deficiencies of *Koshikawa*. In this regard, the Patent Office has asserted that the upper shielding denoted by reference number 14 shown in Figure 2 of *Iizuka*, corresponds to the claimed thin coating film. However, the upper shielding is not in contact with at least one thermal diffusion layer as is now claimed in claims 1 and 9. Quite to the contrary, as can be seen from Figures 1 and 2 of *Iizuka*, a first protective layer 15 is present between the upper shielding 14 and the heat dispersion layer 16.

Simply put, *Koshikawa* and *Iizuka* fail to disclose or suggest a thin coating film in contact with at least one thermal diffusion layer, as recited in each of claims 1 and 9. Moreover, absent an improper resort to Applicants' own disclosure, one of ordinary skill in the art would not have been motivated to modify such disclosures to arrive at the claimed thin coating film in contact with at least one thermal diffusion layer. Thus, for at least the above reasons, it is apparent that no *prima facie* case of obviousness exists. Accordingly, withdrawal of the §103(a) rejection is respectfully requested.

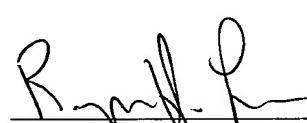
From the foregoing, further and favorable action in the form of a Notice of Allowance is believed to be next in order, and such action is earnestly solicited. If there are any questions concerning this paper or the application in general, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: July 5, 2006

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